

Meeting Minutes
Fairview Park Board
March 3, 2014

Board members present: Chairwoman Beverly Totty, Vice Chairman Jack Cannon, Secretary Richard Edmondson, Patti Carroll, Neil Rice, and Ron Rowe; also present were Interim City Manager Wayne Hall, Park Program Director Jenny Herrera, and members of Friends of Bowie Nature Park.

Absent: Mark Dietze

- I. Meeting was opened. The agenda was approved; the minutes for the February 3, 2014 meeting were also approved.
- II. General park updates: Herrera said the park was closed today due to the recent ice storm, and probably would be closed tomorrow as well. Spring break activities are scheduled for March 17-21 and will include organized activities for families.
- III. Old Business—park system master plan. Discussion focused on the master plan rough draft drawn up by staff and introduced at the February 3 meeting. Totty said comments on the plan had been submitted by the Friends of Bowie Nature Park. Those comments are as follows:

Bowie Park Master Plan Feedback

Friends of Bowie Nature Park

I think the BNP Master Plan is AWESOME! Very thorough and detailed. I can appreciate how much work, and hours, it took. I'm especially happy to see the part about enlarging the Nature Center and hope you can keep it planned for the rear of the building. An addition on the front will look like an addition on the front. Whoever thought up putting the ADA trail to JoAnn's WAS BRILLANT! Love it! Here are a few suggestions and questions. Ignore whatever you want to ignore.

1 Summary and Background
How did we get from 722 acres to 680?

1.3 Partners: Is there need to mention prior grants, which restrict certain changes?

2.3 History of the Park last paragraph: The center offers...brochures, art and a small museum that details the Park's unique history.

3.1.2 Passive Uses Is there any educational signage anywhere on the trails to be mentioned?

3.4.1 BNP Center The foyer is a large open area w/fireplace, ADD nature exhibits, Bowie Museum and welcome desk. Large? storage room Large?

3.4.2 JoAnne's Outdoor Classroom I suggest one sentence at the end: Electricity was provided to JOC in 2011 through a grant obtained by the Friends of BNP. Another change later about JOC.

3.4.3 Signage I'm pretty sure there was no grant to pay for signs.

3.4.6 Treehouse Playground at the end: picnic tables and a ADD ¼ mile hard-surface walking trail

3.4.7 Stage How about calling it the Pine Tree Stage, and how about new wording? The stage's original dimensions were roughly 18'3" wide by 14'3" deep. In 2004 the Friends of Bowie Nature Park increased the width to 28'3", and in 2007 replaced the roof.

5.1 Park Facilities and Infrastructure is critical to stay consistent ADD within the Conservation Easement and with the Park's primary

5.1.2 Facility Needs Here's the other suggestion about JoAnn's OC 2nd paragraph start with: Additional lighting is needed to illuminate the Classroom for more detailed labs....

3rd paragraph start with: More tables are needed.....

5.1.2 Pine Tree Stage ADD Partial shade would improve attendance in summer. Support poles should be installed as needed to hang removable, weather-resistant, colorful triangular tarps to provide shade for seating, which should be increased with the placement of more benches.

One member wrote:

I have a friend that does not live in the City of Fairview that mountain bikes in the park frequently. He said he wishes they would sell a one-year permit rather than have the cash boxes because he doesn't always have change on him. I'm sure he wishes the horses had their own trails too. Other than typos, it looks good to me.

The staff plans to incorporate the Friends' comments, as well as comments made by Board members, including comments made at the February 3 meeting, into a revised draft of the master plan and submit it hopefully at the April 7 meeting. A proposed revision—to include mention of a deed stipulation by Dr. Evangeline Bowie—was presented by Herrera. The stipulation requires that proceeds from any sale of park land be reinvested in the park. Totty expressed concern that the conservation easement supersedes the deed left by Dr. Bowie. She

also said the deed is an exhibit within the conservation easement. Edmondson said all he wanted was a provision within the master plan saying any sale of park land be put back into the park, and mentioned the Park Fund that was established following the sale of 5.9 acres of park land to SouthStar in 2008. Carroll said she wanted to know the balance of that fund, and that there may not be much left in it. Edmondson suggested that rather than quoting directly from the deed, that the wording be changed to simply paraphrase what the deed says. This would be included in section 2.3 “History of the Park.”

IV. Park Fund balance—Al Tarolli, president of the Friends of the Park, said he has been having meetings with city officials to try and determine the present balance of the Park Fund. He has not received an answer, and is anticipating additional meetings to discuss the matter. All he has been able to determine is that the balance was slightly over \$424,000 in 2010, and that the precise number matched a number given to him by a city official. City officials have, he said, indicated to him that the Park Fund “appears in the budget as a restricted fund.” Totty said the Park Fund is “a restricted park fund that is actually in the total numbers of when Fairview reports what its general fund balance is.” She said the Street Fund is another such restricted fund within the total city General Fund. She said the Park Fund was “about \$424,000 the last time it was reported, which was December of ’13, and we’ve not had a quarterly report from the CFO since.”

“\$320,000 was the last I remember,” said Carroll.

“That was before the road,” said Totty.

Hall said 50 percent of the cost of widening Bowie Lake Rd. had been paid for out of the Park fund. He and Tarolli discussed whether engineering fees had also been paid for out of the Park Fund—fees pertaining both to the road widening and trails. Edmondson asked if the money from the sale to SouthStar was in a separate bank account. Hall said yes, Totty said no. “It has its own account number,” said Hall.

“So it’s a separate bank account?” asked Edmondson.

“Yes,” said Hall.

“Isn’t it a simple matter to just check the balance of the bank account?” asked Edmondson.

“Well, we know what the balance is as of—what—three weeks ago? A month ago? It was \$200 and something thousand...how much was it Mr. Tarolli?”

“I can’t speak to anything other than the \$424,000 minus the \$30,000 that showed up in the budget,” said Tarolli. “Now hopefully on Wednesday when I meet with Keith and Tom—”

“And the \$30,000 is for what now?” asked Edmondson.

“Crystal wrote that. It was to cover the budget. The city paid \$200 some odd thousand for the parks, and they took \$30,000 out, according to Crystal’s handwritten notes, to cover the remaining part of the budget for the park.”

Hall said the balance of the Park Fund currently is “under \$300,000.” He added: “Engineering fees and stuff like that has been paid out of it.”

Edmondson asked why engineering fees were paid for out of the park fund. Hall said it was for Bowie Lake Road, the trail around Lake Van, and the Greenway. “But the greenway was never built,” said Edmondson.

“But you did all the engineering—all that was done,” said Herrera.

“So was the engineering for Bowie Lake Road paid for out of the Park Fund?” asked Edmondson.

Hall said it was.

“Even though half of that project was outside the park—the whole engineering fee was paid for out of the Park Fund?”

“That I’m not sure of—the engineering fees—whether that was fifty percent of the engineering fee or not, I have no way of knowing that,” said Hall.

“I’m going to address something here for time basis. I fully understand your questions are not answered. It’s not really here where we have the answers. Because we were discussing fund balance and accounting, and that was not under something for me to investigate,” said Totty. “At this point we’re going to have it on the next agenda. We’ll have answers to the questions. Totally Mr. Hall, myself, we’ll get you answers that you are specifically asking, because I understand that this is two meetings you’ve asked the question.”

“We’ve been working with Mr. Tarolli to try and come up with the proper answers. It’s an unknown to Tom and myself,” Hall said.

Edmondson referenced the minutes from the May 7, 2012 Park Board meeting at which former Park Director Wade Hooper had said that approximately \$35,000 had been spent out of the Park Fund as of that time. Edmondson noted that the sale price of the 5.9 acres was \$450,000, and that expenditures totaling \$35,000 should have left a balance of approximately \$415,000 as of that meeting. Hall said the total cost of the Bowie Lake Road project was \$121,000.

V. Bowie Lake Road, streetscaping—Cannon made a motion to accept a plan recommended by the city arborist, subject to the plan not interfering with underground utilities. The plan calls for the planting of red bud trees (a total of 12) along the south side of Bowie Lake Road, with columnar pin oaks with “gator bags” (total of 5) on the south side of Bowie Lake Road near the liquor store and close to where the road intersects with Highway 100. The motion was seconded by Carroll. In discussion, Hall said he would make an effort to prevent utility

companies from marking the new road or sidewalk. He said such marks left by utility companies eventually wear off, but it takes time and that he did not want to see the new road defaced in such a manner. The motion passed unanimously.

VI. Marketing plan for online survey—Totty said the survey button no longer appears on the front page of the city’s website and that it needs to be put back. Herrera said the wife of the person responsible for the survey just had a baby. “The reason we’re talking about this is because our last directive was to give it a shot in the arm, get it on the front of the website, and tell everybody to go to the website and do the survey,” Totty said. Rice asked if there is a way to prevent people from responding to the survey twice. Totty said the web master may have a way of weeding out email addresses, but she wasn’t sure.

VII. Handicap trail system in Bowie—Cannon made a motion that the Park Board recommend to the Board of Commissioners that engineers be hired to conduct a survey of the Lower Loblolly Loop trail for purpose of upgrading it to meet ADA specifications. Edmondson asked why Loblolly trail and not the trail leading to Joann’s Classroom. Cannon said it would be better to put them in separate resolutions. Edmondson pointed out that the trail to the classroom had been recognized as a priority at the board’s last meeting. Totty said, “We’re going to ask for both.” “If we join them together my fear is that they’re going to say ‘okay,’ and then we end up spending \$50,000 in engineering fees,” said Cannon. Rice asked if the city has given thought to hiring a fulltime engineer. Totty said it had been discussed. Cannon said his purpose is simply to give the BOC two options to look at, one being the Loblolly trail, the other being the trail to the classroom. Hall said that “when we need something from the engineer we try to get two or three things done at the same time.” Cannon amended the motion to have the ADA trail (on Lower Loblolly) extend for up to 1,300 feet, beginning from Lake Van. The motion passed 5-1, with Carroll voting “nay.”

Cannon then made a motion that the BOC engage an engineering firm to do a survey with the purpose of making the trail from the Nature Center to Joann’s Classroom conform to ADA guidelines. The motion was seconded by Rice. In discussion Hall said he had spoken with a state official who had informed him the city could possibly get an 80/20 grant that could be used for trails, and that the city has until April 15 to apply. The motion was approved unanimously.

VIII. Control-burn plan—Cannon stated that a newly-appointed state forester had met with the Tree Board and recommended that before proceeding with the previously-approved pine thinning plan that a control-burn be done in several areas of the park. These would include the five areas around the dome designated for “cut and drop” logging under the pine thinning plan, as well as the dome itself, which could benefit from having fescue grass burned off, and also six additional sections in the south and western portion of the park lying in the area of Bowie Hollow and Dice Lampley roads. The six additional sites were designated on a map of the park and labeled 1 through 6. Cannon put the proposal in the form of a motion. In discussion, Cannon said the forester had expressed concerns over invasive plants becoming a problem when the forest canopy is opened up and had recommended treating the areas with an approved herbicide. The areas around the dome were control-burned two years ago. Hall said a logger is scheduled to come on March 17 to begin thinning the first section near the dome, often referred

to as “the test site.” Discussion took place as to whether the control-burn could be done prior to then, or whether the logger could be rescheduled for a few days later. The control-burn needs to be done preferably in March before the weather becomes warm and dry. Comments from Friends of the Park member Jim Power would seem to indicate that the advice being given now by the new forester may be at variance with that given by the previous forester, Dwight Barnett, as to whether the areas around the dome need to be re-burned prior to being thinned. All agreed, however, that a 2008 control-burn plan, calling for burns every six months, had not been followed. Concern was expressed by Carroll that Park Director Keith Paisley had not had a chance to meet or talk with the new forester. Edmondson suggested that the Park Board direct Hall to facilitate a conversation between Paisley and the new forester to make sure they’re on the same page about what needs to be done. Cannon amended the motion to include a provision that the burn take place prior to the thinning of the “test site” near the dome. The motion was approved unanimously.

IX Pine thinning/ forestry plan—Cannon said he was advised by the new forester that the additional sections to be thinned in the south and western portions of the park should ideally be thinned to a density of 60 basal. He also recommended commercially harvesting the timber that is cut in these areas, saying that this would offset the cost of thinning of trees by the “cut and drop” method in the pine sections around the dome. “The way the process was explained to me is that we would hire a forester—we would actually probably hire the same guy who did the conservation forestry plan,” said Cannon. “We would end up hiring him and he would go in there and do pretty much what Forester Barnett had done, and put the X’s on the trees, and go through there and identify with the timber company which trees that they would harvest out of there.”

Edmondson asked who would supervise the loggers to ensure that only the trees marked are cut. Cannon said it would be done by the city-hired forester. Edmondson then asked if the city’s own park staff would participate as well. Both Cannon and Totty replied that they would. “Because we’ve been warned before about the danger of loggers cutting more trees than they’re supposed to,” Edmondson interjected. Totty pointed out that the loggers would be under contract. Cannon described the arrangement as “a win-win for everybody,” in that it provides a much-needed thinning in the western sector, but also pays for the “cut and drop” method in the more sensitive areas of the park. Carroll expressed concern over the fact that the new proposal is at variance with what had previously been agreed to, i.e. the thinning of the five sections around the dome. “It’s like we’re not across the finish line, and the finish line is getting moved,” Carroll said. Cannon said that the “drop and cut” and the “extraction” methods are in reality “two separate tests,” and reiterated that the latter would pay for the former. Cannon made a motion to recommend to the Board of Commissioners that the discussed areas—labeled 1 through 6 on the map—be thinned to a density of 60-80 basal, based upon the recommendation of the new forester, whose name is Jeff Piate. The motion also includes provisions that the wood from the felled trees be extracted and sold commercially, that the entire operation, including the marking of the trees to be cut, be carried out and/or supervised by a city-hired forester, and that the sale of the timber would offset the cost of the forester and cutting expense.

In discussion, Edmondson commented, “When we discussed all this last year, when Dwight (the former forester) was here, he told us there was very little market for pulp wood. Has that changed?”

Cannon replied: “The forester who was out here before said there were some trees that were big enough that could actually be used for wood—for actually wood—cause I had said that to him, and he said that the particular area that he’s seen, that there are some trees there that would be used for actual—for cutting the wood.”

The motion passed unanimously.

X. In public comments, Tarolli noted that the “forest management plan that the Board has approved says that—they recommend cut and drop.” Totty disagreed, saying that the plan discussed thinning only. Edmondson said he thought Tarolli was talking about the Pine Thinning plan that was approved by both the Park Board and the Board of Commissioners the previous year, and which does specify “cut and drop.” Considerable discussion ensued, with some confusion, as to what had previously been stated about “cut and drop”, and in which document the matter had been discussed. Discussion also focused on whether or not the pine thinning motion approved at the present meeting conforms to the requirements of the conservation easement or whether it would meet the approval of the Land Trust for Tennessee. Friends member Marsha Elliot said she appreciated Tarolli’s comments about the need to “follow protocol” and ensure that what takes place is signed off upon by the Land Trust. Totty said she agreed that the Land Trust would have the final say.

XI. The next meeting will be April 7. The meeting was adjourned.